A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, September 8. 1711.

WELL, Gentlemen, since you will have it that Credit is fallen, and every Body talk of her as Dead, nay, and are ready to lend their Hands to bury her, as if they were afraid she should rise again before they had secur'd her: Will you now join with me in one useful Enquiry—— The Question is short — WHAT'S NEXT? That's all I would have you ask.

Two differing kinds of People will give you two differing Answers to this Question; *Make Peace*, say the high Gentlemen, *make Peace*—— That's the next Thing you can do; you have nothing else left for it, *Make Peace, or be Ruin'd.*

Pray let us ask these People a Question or two—— What do you mean by *make Peace?* What, *beg a Peace*, send to the King of *France* for *Peace*, give him his own Terms, that is, give up *Spain* to him, and the *Indies?* —— I state it thus plain, because really the Words, *make Peace*, lead us directly to it; and it is indeed the meaning of *the Words*, as well as the meaning of *the Party*: For to bid us make Peace when the *French* does not seek it, is to bid us seek it—— To bid us seek it of the King of *France*, is to bid us seek it upon his own Terms,

Terms, and not upon ours; to give him *Charte Blanche*, and bid him ſet down his own Conditions.

And what is the matter, Gentlemen? Why muſt you ſeek or beg Peace of the *French*? Are you beaten? Have ye not had the better of them? Are ye not now driving them out of one of their ſtrong Towns, and dare they look you in the Face to relieve it? Will you *beg Peace* with Victory in your Hand? This would be like the prepoſterous Story of the *Muſcovites* getting a Victory over the *Turks*, and then hanging out a White Flag for a Treaty—This is indeed ſomething Ridiculous; a *Glorious* Victory, and an *Ignominious* Peace; beat the *Turks* firſt, and then give them up *Azoph*; overthrow their Army, and then reſtore *Kaminieck*. Juſt this would our People be at; cry up every Action for a Victory, and then give up *Spain* to them; beat them, and then yield to them; theſe are odd Things to be done, and not eaſily to be accounted for.

Well, this then cannot hold, *What's next?* Why if you muſt not *make Peace*, you muſt have Money to carry on the War, but no body will part with a Shilling to the Government; no Man will lend upon Funds, no Man will venture to truſt the Government—Well, Gentlemen, *let it alone*, ſee who will have the worſt of it; I'll Anſwer for it; the War being to continue, Money muſt be had, it muſt be rais'd within the Year, and if it falls hard, we cannot help it.

And firſt, then, you Gentlemen that are weary of raiſing Money by way of Credit and Loan, I would have you prepare for heavy Taxes, large Schemes, great Levies of Money; the Queen muſt have it, and the Parliament will find Ways and Means, never fear it; and firſt think of a *Tax upon Bread*, prepare to ſee this put in Execution with the utmoſt Rigour—Nor is this a grievous Tax, if we conſider how freely we have Tax'd our ſelves this Way, when we have had no occaſion for it; 'tis not above three Year ago, ſince Corn roſe from 3 *s.* a Buſhel to 9 *s.* meerly on a wild Notion, without Ground, a Whymſie of Dearth in the midſt of Plenty; a Prohibition followed this Alarm, *which iſſu'd in this*, That whereas they were not to Export any Corn till the *Michaelmaſs* after, when that Time expir'd, there was more Old Corn in *England* than had been in 20 Year before; ſo that it was apparent, there was no ſuch Thing as a Scarcity, but that we had more Corn in *Britain* than we could Conſume—Yet in this Time, What a Price did the Corn bear? Above double the Rate—And at the ſame Time, ſhould a Gabel of but half the riſing Price be put upon our Bread, what a Murmuring Nation ſhould we have been? What would you have ſaid, to have paid 4 *s.* a Buſhel Tax upon Wheat? Would you not have cry'd out, the poor would be ſtarv'd, the Labouring Families would be undone, and the Nation would be Ruin'd? Nay, ſhall I ask your Opinion only, Do you not think we ſhould have been all in Tumults, Rabbles, Riots, and perhaps in Blood, for Bread is a mighty Mutinous Article, and People are in nothing ſo apt to break in upon their Paſſive Principles, as in the Article of Hunger; Nature is very apt here, to rebel againſt Principle, and upon ſuch a terrible Caſe, I dare not anſwer for the Doctrine of *Non-Reſiſtance*, in the moſt Loyal of you all.

Yet this Tax of 4 *s. per* Buſhel upon Wheat, I affirm we paid for near one whole Year, one to another, purely on the ungrounded Notion of a Scarcity of Corn, when God had bleſs'd us with as good a Crop, as could generally be expected, and in ſome Parts of *Britain*, eſpecially *Scotland*, a better than had been in many Years before—But we are a Nation of Chimera's, and Whymſie has a great ſhare in Governing us.

Should the Parliament lay on a Gabel upon Corn, of but 6 *d. per* Buſhel, How would you cry out, how would you Argue for the Poor, but not one Word for the Poor, when you paid eight times the Summ, and ſometimes more, without any real Neceſſity?

Well, when your Corn is Tax'd, then 1 *l. per* Pound Value upon the Sale of all live

live Cattle every Time they shall be sold, which at Market, will amount at least to 1 *d. per* Pound Weight upon Beef, and ½ *d. per* Pound upon Mutton, Veal, Lamb, and Pork.

Next you may expect to pay 1 *d. per* Pound upon Cheese, and ½ *d. per* Pound upon Butter, to be paid by the Seller.

Then a General Tax of 1 *s. per* Pound, perhaps two, on the Value of all Wrought Silks and Broad-Cloth worn in *Britain*, and 6 *d. per* Yard uppon Druggets, Kerseys, Coarse-Cloth, *&c.* and in proportion upon all other wearing Aparrel; 6 *d.* a piece upon Hats, 1 *s. per* Pair on Silk Stocking, double Duties on Linnen Imported, and 6 *d. per* Ell on Linnen Manufactur'd, and the like.

And now, Gentlemen, these Taxes being laid, and handsomly Collected, I'll tell you two great Advantages you shall reap by it.

1. You shall never stand in need of any more Loans; the Word publick Credit, which you are so tir'd with, shall die, and be buried, and you shall never hear any more of her, the Government shall never want to borrow a Shilling more——No more Debts shall be Entail'd upon your Posterity, or high Interests paid for Money; the Payment of these Things shall raise what Summs soever the Queen can want; the Government need not be put to the difficulty of devising Funds to borrow; if the Queen wants 7 Millions a Year, these Taxes will bring it in; if her Majesty has occasion for double that Summ, 'tis but doubling these Taxes, and the Thing's done, it must be paid—— *Funds* and *Loans* are devised only to ease you of such Payments as these, and prevent the oppressing Weight of intollerable Taxes: Publick Credit was a Medium found out by the Government, which was loth to squeeze too hard, the Indigent part of the Nation——And who found it much to the publick Advantage, to pay Interest for a great Summ, the Principal of which might be reduc'd, and the Interest too, at more leisure, rather than to force the mighty Expence all at once from the People.

But if ye scorn the help, if ye contemn the Compassion of the Government, if you are above so much pity, and are weary of the Favour; God forbid Men should be cross'd in a Thing they have so much Right to be gratify'd in; never make more Noise about it—— If you will have it, you shall; let all Projects of Loans and Funds expire; let them receive their final Sentence from this Hour——The *English* Nation scorning to borrow Money, or make use of Anticipations, being above the Slavery of taking Credit, and resolv'd to suffer no longer the Usury and Extortion of Stock-Jobbing Scriveners and Brokers, abhorring the Entailing Debts on their Posterity, and to let the Enemy know, that they are able to carry on the present War to the end, not of the Confederacy, but even to the End of the World, if need be——Do now declare, for raising every Year's Tax, whatever the Summ be upon the Nation, within each respective Year——And now we are talking of it, I must own, for I love Liberty, this self-will'd obstinate People, have nevertheless, an undoubted indefeazible Right, like the two Soldiers at *Barcelona*, that would eat Grapes, and told their General they were *English Men*, and ought to be at Liberty to kill themselves whenever they had occasion for it; so the People of *Britain*, have, I say, an undoubted Right in the Payment of their Taxes, to Ruin themselves at once, if they please, and to refuse to be beholden to any milder Ways and Means that might prevent it.

2. Another Advantage of these immediate Taxes, will be, that you will put an effectual stop to the late famous Art and Mystery of Stock-Jobbing—— And indeed this will be done thus, the shortest

shortest Way, I won't say the best Way, *viz.* By Constituting in their Room, a little Army, of about one Hundred Thousand Collectors, Receivers, Tax-Gatherers, Excise-Men, Offices and Officers innumerable, a Thing, which however grievous it may otherwise be, yet will provide for and support a great many poor Indigent Families, who by the stop of Trade and Calamity of the War, are now out of Employment, and in Distress.

These Things, Gentlemen, I thought fit to lay before you, for the Encouragement of some People among us, who are pleas'd to say that pleading with you to support Credit, is only Arguing for a Party, and falling in with the Ministry; and now you are Instructed how advantageously you may go on to run down Credit, and prevent Loans, &c. I hope you will no longer blame your humble Servant, but with all Speed set about the Experiment ——— For nothing is more certain than this, do but fix some few Taxes, as above, to bring in constantly every Year about 7 Millions, you effectually take from the Government and from the Ministry, the Advantage and Pleasure of Projecting Funds, loading you with Interests and huge Debts, and they will have no more Pretences of borrowing Money from the Subject.

Then will come the happy Day, when you may depose the She-Tyrant call'd Credit, and Banish her as a Scandalous Jilt, that has toss'd the Nation in a Blanket, and to whom we have been Slaves long enough, but of whom we shall have now no occasion, from henceforth and for ever.

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